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LAFAYETTE VISTAS

COOPERATIVE EFFORT LEADS TO PLAN FOR NEW VETS' HALL...AND CLEARS THE WAY FOR NEW LIBRARY

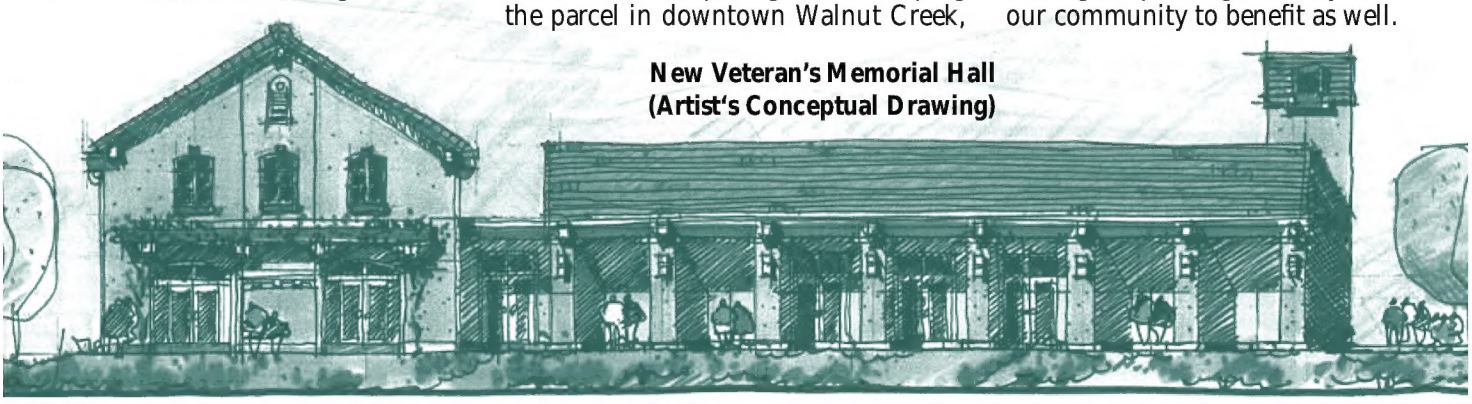
In a deal reminiscent of kids trading amongst themselves in the lunchroom... swapping unwanted items to get preferred treats... eight local organizations and governments are structuring a deal that should bring Lafayette one step closer to building our new library. In an impressive cooperative effort, the Cities of Lafayette and Walnut Creek, Contra Costa County, Veterans' groups in both cities, the Lafayette and Walnut Creek Redevelopment Agencies and the Lamorinda Development Company are forging a plan that will provide a new Veterans' Memorial Hall, while at the same time satisfying the needs of the individual parties.

As reported last issue, Lafayette selected the Veterans' Memorial Hall property on First Street as the preferred site for the new library, but first a new home needed to be found for the Veterans. Meanwhile, in Walnut Creek there also is a Veterans' Hall that is small and in need of repair, yet sits on a piece of prime property that the Walnut Creek Redevelopment Agency would like to make available for downtown retail use. After some convincing, Contra Costa County, which owns both buildings, has tentatively agreed to sell the properties and allocate all of the proceeds towards the construction of a brand new Veterans' building, with the proviso that additional funding be made available from other sources to pay the balance of the construction cost. Veterans' Groups in the two cities have decided it makes sense to join forces and build a bigger, better, brand-new Central Contra Costa County Veterans' Memorial Hall.

At publication deadline, all parties agreed that the ideal site for a new Veteran's Hall is the northeast corner of Mt. Diablo Blvd. and Risa Rd., in front of the Hillside Motel in Lafayette. The site actually consists of two parcels, one owned by the City of Lafayette, the other by a private party. When combined, the approximately one acre site will be sold to Contra Costa County and a new Veterans' Memorial Hall will be built. Early plans show a building that is eight to ten thousand square feet, surrounded by substantial landscaping and more than fifty parking spaces. The plans include a kitchen, dining room, clubroom, assembly room and two meeting rooms.

The total budget for site purchase, development and construction is estimated to be $4.4 million. The County will allocate the estimated $2.4 million generated by the sale of the two existing properties to the project. The Lafayette Redevelopment Agency and the Lamorinda Development Co., which will be acquiring and developing the parcel in downtown Walnut Creek, will each contribute $1 million. The Lafayette Redevelopment Agency, working closely with Vets representatives, will oversee design and construction and once completed, the County will take ownership and lease the facility to the Veterans' Group once the building is completed.

The net result of this deal means the Veterans will get a brand new, attractive building which is better organized, more accessible and in compliance with modern building codes. In addition, the Hall will be an appealing rental facility available to other organizations in the area, thus allowing the Veterans to generate the income necessary to maintain the building. Contra Costa County will be relieved of maintenance and liability on two dilapidated structures while gaining a new, modern building. The City of Lafayette will benefit from an impressive architectural statement anchoring the west end of downtown and will acquire a site in the heart of downtown for our new library. All without having to raise taxes or find private funding. There is no question that the Vets, who have sacrificed so much in service to their country, deserve fine new facilities that properly honor their contribution. And now, through their continued dedication to serving the public good, they've allowed our community to benefit as well.



New Veteran's Memorial Hall (Artist's Conceptual Drawing)

New Master Plan for Pleasant Hill Road

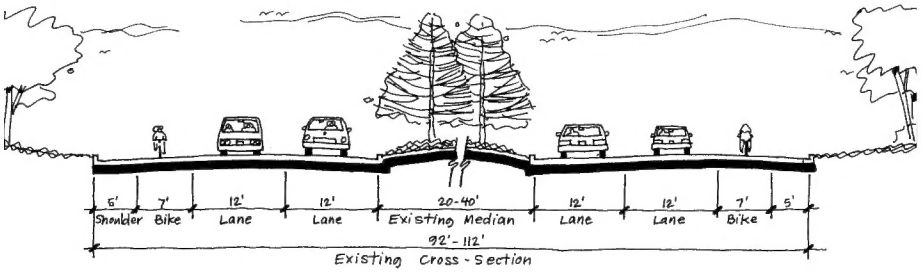
In recent years, Pleasant Hill Road south of Mt. Diablo Blvd has become progressively busier as the number of vehicles per day has increased. To thousands of drivers each day, Pleasant Hill Road is a thoroughfare; to the residents who live on or near it, Pleasant Hill Road is a neighborhood street with pedestrians, kids on bikes, and cars exiting driveways.

While recognizing they will not be able to reduce the use of the road as a major arterial, the Circulation Commission and city staff have been working with residents for more than 18 months to develop a plan to increase safety for pedestrians and bicyclists along that corridor. In October the City Council adopted the plan, which includes both immediate and long-term steps that mitigate traffic impacts on the neighborhood.

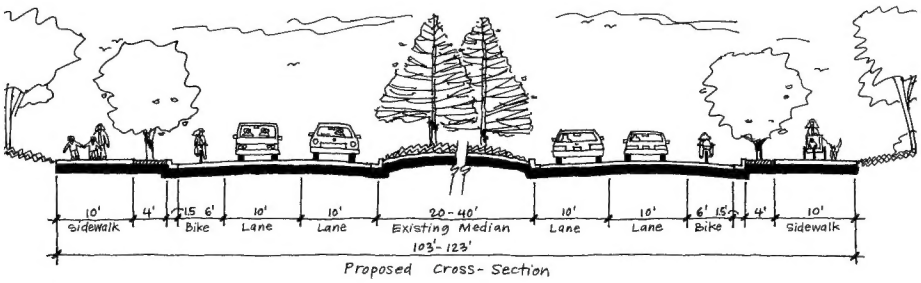
A main feature of the plan is a new design for Pleasant Hill Road. (See drawing below)

The initial cost estimate for this project is $3.4 million, a small portion of which can be funded by the existing budget. Most of the project, however, remains unfunded, and the plan will be implemented in stages as funding allows.

The plan includes recommendations for a new traffic signal at Condit Road to facilitate pedestrian crossings, clarify right-of-way between cars, improve side street access and modulate vehicle speed. In addition, the city will work with Caltrans to improve safety at the Old Tunnel Road intersection by adding a crosswalk, improving signage, and possibly re-designing the off-ramp to inhibit high-speed right turns. Residents will see some improvements implemented over the next two years.



Existing Cross-Section



Proposed Cross-Section

Features to reduce vehicular speed and increase pedestrian and bicycle safety.

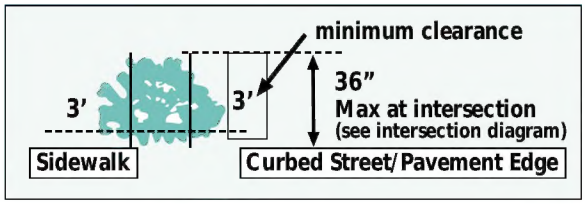
- Traffic signal installation/modification to slow traffic down and create safe crosswalks.
- Curb moved closer to the vehicle lanes.
- A continuous 10' pathway to provide pedestrians and young bicyclists a safe area, separated from traffic.
- Bicycle lanes will be continued on both sides of the road and demarcated by a textured paint strip.
- Tree lined landscape strips to reduce long distance visibility and create a neighborhood feel.

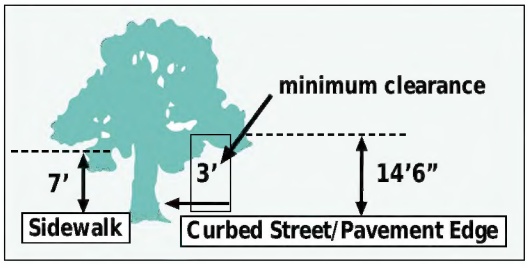
Tree Trimming Requirements

Property owners are responsible for maintaining trees and vegetation so they do not encroach into the street. If property owners do not comply with the standards, the Public Works Department will complete the work and bill owners for the cost.

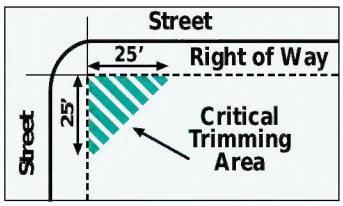
Trees must be trimmed as follows:

- 7 feet between sidewalk and lowest branch
- 14 feet 6 inches between lowest branch and curbed street or pavement edge of roadway
- At least 3 feet between tree and pavement edge





Additional clearing at intersections for visibility.



Stormwater Pollution Control

Help us keep the Bay clean! For maximum street cleaning efficiency:

- Keep trees and shrubs trimmed away from curbs and gutters. See diagrams and related article for trimming requirements.
- For street sweeping days, move all parked vehicles off the street. Street sweeping schedules can be found on the City website at www.ci.lafayette.ca.us under the Public Works department.
- Please call the City offices to report any problems. Hotline: 299-3259 or Public Works Services: 934-3908

The Future is Now

Lafayette Joins "Shaping Our Future"

Lafayette, though only minutes from the "big city", is on a mission to maintain its unique semi-rural character and small town atmosphere. In this way, we're different from some of our neighboring cities in Contra Costa County and, indeed, it is the small town, "country-fied" nature of the community — along with our fine schools — that makes living here so appealing. Our general attitude towards growth, reflected in our General Plan, is different from many other cites. While east county cities may actively encourage large residential developments, Lafayette is essentially built out…while west county cities are looking for ways to revitalize their retail and commercial areas, Lafayette is thriving…and while other central county cities court large "big box" and chain retailers, Lafayette is happy with smaller, more personal merchants.

Thus it was with some trepidation that Lafayette decided to participate in a new countywide visioning project called Shaping Our Future. Recognizing that, over the next twenty years, some 225,000 new families will move into Contra Costa County, the study hopes to bring residents together to plan for growth and change. In Lafayette, however, there is concern that Shaping Our Future participants will focus on projects that would encourage high-density growth, particularly around our BART station. However, after careful consideration and in-depth discussions with the planners of Shaping Our Future, the City has decided to be part of the project. On February 20th, Lafayette's mayor joined representatives from 18 other cities at the kick-off meeting for the project.

Why Did We Decide To Participate?

During initial project-scoping meetings, it was made clear that Shaping Our Future will not require Lafayette, or any other community, to alter its General Plan in a manner that is inconsistent with our residents' desires. Lafayette's mayor and councilmembers conveyed to the Shaping Our Future Policy Committee the importance of neighborhood preservation to Lafayette residents and our hopes that this concept will be integrated into the guiding principles eventually adopted by the study.

If all goes well, Shaping Our Future will produce growth policies that represent the attitudes and goals of all Contra Costa cities. However, because our goals might differ from other cities in the county — and because we are centrally located with a BART station — it is important that our residents be a part this project; participation in Shaping Our Future will assure that our unique concerns and goals are included as part of the decision-making process.

In order to have a stronger voice, and because Orinda and Moraga share many similarities with Lafayette — especially in opinions about open space and growth — representatives from the three cities have agreed to represent Lamorinda as a region, rather than as separate cities, on the project.

How Can You Participate?

Citizen participation is an integral part of Shaping Our Future and Lafayette residents are encouraged to participate. There will be a series of workshops: first to determine what the prevailing attitudes and opinions are, next to develop a common vision for the County, and finally to examine implementation strategies. Two upcoming opportunities for you to get involved include:

- Shaping Our Future County-Wide Workshop
  Saturday, May 11, 2002 • 9am to Noon
  Las Lomas High School, Walnut Creek
- Shaping Our Future Lamorinda Regional Workshop
  Thursday, May 30, 2002 • 7pm to 9pm
  Wagner Ranch Gymnasium, 350 Camino Pablo, Orinda

For more information, call the City offices at 284-1968

Around Town

Town Hall Theatre **Box Office: 283-1557 or www.thtc.org – Tickets available at The Lafayette Bookstore. 5/30 – 6/23: The Secret Life of Walter Mitty.** Enter the comic & endearing imagination of a middle-aged man who yearns for adventure in "a thoroughly pleasant musical evening." **7/25-28 & 8/8-11: We'll Take Manhattan…again!** Special repeat performances of the spectacular Broadway Tribute. Only 8 shows!

May 4 **ANNUAL SCIENCE DAY OF DISCOVERY** – 10am – 1pm. Lafayette Nursery School, 979 First Street: $3.50 per child. Fun, hands-on science & nature exploration for preschoolers through 3rd grade.

June 1 **CONCERT AT THE LAFAYETTE RESERVOIR** – Sponsored by Lafayette Rotary: 1-4 pm, FREE! Join the Stanley and Acalanes Concert Bands and the Rossmoor Big Band for a day of music and fun!

1st & 3rd Sat./month **FRIENDS OF THE LAFAYETTE LIBRARY BOOK SALE** – Help raise funds for new books at the new library! Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Rd.

Parks & Recreation **500 St Mary's Road, Call 284-2232 for info & reservations.**

ACE OF CLUBS (Grades 9-12) – Concert & Dance Club one Friday each month: $5. Info @ Teen Hotline: 284-5815

SUMMER FUN (Grades K-6) – Kids participate in sports, arts & crafts and story time. Stanley Intermediate School.

AFTERNOON ADVENTURE CAMP (Grades K-6) – Weekly themes are featured mixed in with games, field trips, arts & crafts and more. Stanley Intermediate School.

What's black and white and red on top? Lafayette's new police car fleet!

Over the last few months, Lafayette has replaced old, white police cars with new, traditional black and whites. The six new cars and one 4-wheel drive vehicle are much more visible and readily identifiable, thus aiding traffic and speed control in the downtown and in the neighborhoods. 75% of the funding for the new fleet came from state grants.

Interested in Hosting an International Student?

The International Education Center at Diablo Valley College (IEC at DVC) is looking for host families to house international students on a temporary basis, while they better their English skills. All you need to do is provide two meals per day and a bedroom for the student, within a supportive family environment. In order to offset expenses, students in the IEC at DVC program pay host families a monthly stipend of $600.00 per student.

For more information, please contact the Housing Coordinator, Fia Parker, at (925) 676-4600 ext. 103, or by email at: fparker@dvc.edu

HISTORIC SNAPSHOTS

Part 8:
Lafayette Becomes a City

In July 1968, fifty-seven percent of registered voters in Lafayette turned out to vote on an issue that had twice before been defeated: Should Lafayette incorporate and become a city? This time it passed with 3279 votes in favor and 2692 against. Why did the residents finally choose to add a new layer of government to their lives... and why did it take so long?

Out-of-Control Growth

The 1960s was a period of incredible growth for Lafayette, the population almost tripled between 1960 and 1970, from 7,000 to over 20,000 residents. New commercial buildings were popping up on Mt. Diablo with little planning and few restrictions. Because it was unincorporated, the area known as "Lafayette" did not control planning or zoning, rather, that responsibility fell to the County. And the County had a land use plan that allowed for high-density development, anticipating that as many as 60,000 people would eventually live in Lafayette! Residents who had been attracted by the small town, semi-rural atmosphere were concerned that Lafayette was changing too much and too fast.

Bob Fisher, who actively campaigned in the final drive for incorporation, explained, "The incorporation effort focused on the importance of local control, largely for the purpose of influencing land use and future growth." But, as much as Lafayette residents wanted to be in control of their own destiny, they didn't want to pay for the privilege with additional taxes.

According to Ned Robinson, who opposed incorporation twice and campaigned in favor of it the third time, "The first two times, the numbers didn't make sense. There were not enough existing taxes to provide the money the city needed to operate independently. In 1967, it finally looked economically feasible. We would be entitled to enough money from sales tax and other fees so that we could make this work without levying an additional property tax on ourselves."

BART, slated for completion in 1970, had also become a concern, since many people feared that BART would encourage unchecked development. Bob Fisher says he thinks that was a major factor in changing voters minds and getting the incorporation approved.

Lafayette's First Mayor, Don Black, 1968

In the Beginning

When Lafayette residents approved incorporation in July 1968, they also elected the first city council members: Bob Fisher, Gordon Holmes, Don Black, John Marchant and Martin Cogburn. The day after the election, Bob Fisher called Charlie Williams, who had been Pleasant Hill's first city attorney after its incorporation a few years earlier, and asked, "Okay, what do we do now?" Williams met with the newly elected city officials, even before they took office, and outlined what steps were necessary as well as prepared the agenda for the first council meeting. Charlie Williams was then hired as city attorney...a position in which he still continues to serve to this day!

Bob Fisher recalled the early days on the council, "Because we were clear about why we needed to incorporate, we were clear about what we needed to do. Within 30-60 days of incorporation we had created a BART Commission, a Fire Services Commission, and a Planning Commission, which quickly developed a Hillside Ordinance and Sign Ordinance. Most importantly, the Council decreed that anyone who wanted a building permit or had a zoning issue had to submit an application and plans to Lafayette's Planning Commission."

Within three years, Lafayette had adopted a new General Plan — which reduced the potential population by 50%. Lafayette citizens had accomplished their goals — they secured the semi-rural nature of the community, protected their hillsides and gained control of their destiny. And the rest... is history.

CITY DIRECTORY

For Council Members call: **284-1968**

Council Members

Don Tatzin	**Mayor**
Carol Federighi	**Vice Mayor**
Erling Horn	**Council Member**
Ivor Samson	**Council Member**
Jay Strauss	**Council Member**

Messages to **all** Council Members: **Ext. 907**

Administration

General Reception and	**284-1968**
Steven Falk, City Manager	**Fax: 284-3169**
Tracy Robinson, Admin. Srv. Dir.	**299-3227**
Gonzalo Silva, Financial Srv. Mgr.	**299-3213**
Joanne Robbins, City Clerk	**299-3210**

Community Development

Ann Merideth, Director	**299-3218**
Tony Coe, Engineering Srv. Mgr.	**284-1951**
Niroop Srivatsa, Planning Srv. Mgr.	**284-1976**
Ron Lefler, Public Works Srv. Mgr.	**299-3214**
P.W. Hotline (to report problems)	**299-3259**

If you observe illegal dumping in creeks & storm drains or accidental spills on roads, call Contra Costa Hazardous Materials Division 646-2286.

Lamorinda School Bus Program

Juliet Shanks, Analyst	**299-3216**
	Or 299-3215

Parks and Recreation — 284-2232

Jennifer Russell, Director	
Yvonne Ozorio, Senior Services	**284-5050**
Teen Programs	**284-5815**

Police Services

Emergency: 24 Hours	**911**
Police Dispatch: 24 Hours	**284-5010**
Police Business Office:	**283-3680**

Anonymous Tipline, Traffic Enforcement, Suggestions & LEARN (Laf. Emergency Action Response Network), 299-3232 X 2205

Addresses — Fax: 284-3169

Street Address:	**3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd. #210**
Mailing Address:	**P.O. Box 1968**
	Lafayette, CA 94549-1968
Website:	**www.ci.lafayette.ca.us**

E-MAIL: Council/staff members can be reached via e-mail using the following address format:

First Initial + Last Name @lovelafayette.org

Example: SFalk@lovelafayette.org

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